

Hamtaro !Â; Moonlit Sunrise

by Aroua

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Summary: *Closed Temporarily* The sequel to Nothing you Love is Lost, also done by me. Featuring Panda and the new Hamster Keona, as they search for their old owner! *Closed Temporarily*

1. Angel Wings

****Moonlit Search for Love and Loss****

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> Guess what?! It's the new story, sequel to Nothing you Love is Lost! Visit N.Y.L.I.L. under my FanFiction pen-name, TerraLuna17! I hope ya like it! For a picture of Keona, go here:
<http://www.geocities.com/viennawood/keona.jpg>

****Chapter One:**** Angel Wings

~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

Keona slept peacefully in her quiet bedroom, dreaming of the love she and Panda shared. In her dreams, her feelings were illustrated beautifully, a feeling of wholeness and completeness accompanied by a dark, empty feeling of loss. Keona never dreamt in pictures or events, but in wonderful feelings and dazzling colors. Luckily, Keona never heard the snores of her room-mate dozing in the main room. Unfortunately, this particular morning, a lone tear drifted down her furry cheek as she trembled at bearing the horror of her dream. Suddenly she heard a familiar sound which roused her from her heavy slumber. It was the sound of a door being pulled opened, creaking on its hinges and letting in a whoosh of warm dewy air. She heard it every morning when the first of her hamster friends arrived.

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Keona scurried out of bed and went to greet the newcomer. When she passed the threshold she saw him- Panda! Rushing into his arms, she hugged him and kissed him.

"Panda! How are you? I missed you SOOO much....."

Panda was a little surprised, but didn't let go.

"Um, I missed you too... although it was only eleven hours..."

Keona looked up to stare at him with great green eyes, brimming with tears.

"I know... but... *snif* I just like seeing you, that's all... actually, I had a dream that... that..."

Keona ran to find a handkerchief and hastily proceeded to blow her nose. Panda rushed over and patted her on the back as she blew snot onto a formerly white hanky. Using as few fingers as possible, he took it from her and tossed it into a hamper.

"Now," Panda said kindly, "What did you dream about?"

Snuggling against Panda, she seemed to feel much better as she told him about the angst of her dream.

"First, you and I were here, talking, and suddenly this shadow was over us and these great chromish-black talons came down and picked you up... and I watched you fly away on an owl... then in my dream the owl was gone and you had your own wings and were flying away... and you forgot about me and never returned..."

Suddenly she burst into tears and Panda silently comforted her. When she had stopped crying, Panda lifted her chin so her verdant eyes were gazing into his, and whispered,
> "I would never leave you, Keona. You're my angel... and I love you." Keona smiled sheepishly.<p>

"Panda... you always know just what to say. I love you too..." she gave him a quick kiss and hug, and changed the subject.
> "So, anyway, what are you doing here so early? You usually aren't here for another twenty minutes."<p>

"Mimi is going on vacation, and she left early this morning. One of her friends is going to feed me once a day."

"That's terrible! You'll be all alone!"

Panda grinned. "Do I look alone to you?"

Keona smiled. "True... at what time does her friend come?"

"Eight at night," Panda responded. "Why?"

Keona shook her head briskly. "No reason," she said crisply. "Just curious." She then accented her remark with a musical laugh which made Panda's knees tremble. His favorite part about Keona was her laugh.

Just then the door swung open for a second time and in walked the

tall, burly Boss. His rude and loud exterior hid his soft, sweet personality, which most people didn't bother to take into account. Keona was not one of them.

"Hi, Boss!" she cried sweetly, giving him a quick hug. "How are you today?"

Boss sweatdropped and backed away. "Um, okay... you're in a very good mood, I take it..."

Keona grinned and glanced slyly at Panda before replying cheerfully, "Yup!... But you didn't answer my question- HOW ARE YOU?!" Despite her words, her eyes twinkled.

"No better than usual," Boss replied dryly. "Some moles invaded my bedroom last night, and I had to fight 'em off." Keona looked thoroughly concerned.

"Too awful! How often does that happen?"

"About once a month. They never learn!" Boss said, and chuckled. Panda cleared his throat.

"Well, Boss, my slate is clear- I've nothing to build at the moment. Any suggestions?" Boss stroked his chin thoughtfully.

"Maybe a sturdier door for my house! Honestly, those stupid moles..." Panda and Keona burst out laughing.

Once again the door opened- quieter, this time. The person who emerged from it, however, was not quiet. He, as usual, was jovial and excited, for no apparent reason. Hamtaro grinned at the three of them, and at the still-sleeping Snoozer.

"Hi guys!" he said enthusiastically. "Great morning, isn't it?" He sounded like he meant every word more than he knew.

"And why are you so happy?" Boss asked, a tiny smile playing on his lips, trying to conceal itself. "Laura give you a new toy to play with?"

Hamtaro shook his head, his spirited grin not budging. "Better! Laura says her friend Travis said he'd go on a date with her! I don't know what that is, but if she's happy, I'M happy!"

Panda smiled patiently and explained the concept of a date, or what it was to a twelve year old. Keona wasn't listening. When she and Panda were first reunited, she talked to him about the pain of hearing the others talk about their humans. He had advised her not to think about it (For this was his own solution), and it had worked up until now. Now, however, Hamtaro had caught her with her guard down, and she remembered wistfully the day Mina had told her she was going on her first date. Keona had known what it was, and had been happy for her human.

Now, she let herself wander, unaware, into a realm of lost memory, the realm of everything she no longer had. Up until now she had not allowed herself to think about it, but now she could not stop. She was practically delirious, was unaware of what was going on around her as Panda waved his hand in her face. Finally she was jerked out

of this phase of grief, and looked apologetically at the others.

"Oops," she said frankly. Nobody said anything. Keona cleared her throat, and then continued. "Sorry. Did I, um, miss anything?"

Luckily, she missed the look Panda gave to Hamtaro and Boss, refraining them from speaking. He tried to smile. "No problem. Hey, I'll be right back. I just remembered; I want to show Keona something."

He led her away and into her room. Closing the door, he said quietly, "Keona, what's wrong?" She turned to look at him, her expression somber and her eyes shining with restrained tears.

"It's... nothing. Believe me, I'm all right." Panda looked at her quizzically, and dismissed it with a "You sure?"

"Yeah. I'm... I'm fine." She smiled and squeezed his hand. When they re-entered the main room, they saw that both Oxnard and Pashmina had arrived. Keona quickly planted a wide grin on her face.

"Pash! What's up?"

As the two girls made conversation, Panda confined himself to his building corner, thinking intently about Keona. As the morning wore on, the rest of the hamsters arrived and the day began.

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2. The Magic of a Dream

****Moonlit Search for Love and Loss****

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****Chapter Two:**** The Magic of a Dream

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(A/N: First Person: Keona) Throughout the day, I watched Panda sitting in his little corner. He appeared to be writing something, so others could assume that he was working on a new creation. But I knew him too well. Whenever he made rough draft blueprints, he was fully focused on his work. However, I could caught him peeking around at me several times. I could also see that he had no tools, no ruler, no compass, just a pencil. And he sat there, writing- or at least pretending to.

I knew him well enough that when I could tell he wasn't doing anything, an idea was brewing in his head. Not an idea for a new

project, but something outside carpentry. If it were a new project, he would be drawing like mad, getting his half-baked ideas onto paper.

"How about you, Keona?... Ki? Hello, earth to Keona!" I was blandly aware of the voices around me, and suddenly I remembered that I had been in the middle of a conversation.

"Oh! Oh.... oops. I did it again, didn't I?" That was the third time since that morning I had spaced out. I'm SUCH an idiot!

"Yup! Geez, Keona, what are you thinking about??" Sandy demanded good-naturedly.

"Not much..." she murmured, crossing her fingers behind her back as she lied. "I'm just tired, I guess."

"Really?" Bijou asked worriedly. "What time did you get to sleep last night?"

"Yeah, maybe you have in-shon-a-mi-a! Um, imshonamia!" Pashmina cried fretfully. I grimaced.

"You mean insomnia?" I asked, trying not to laugh. Pashmina nodded, blushing unmercifully. "I doubt it," I replied, amused.

Pashmina looked relieved. "Ookyoo!" said Penelope excitedly. Pashmina bent to talk to Penelope.

"What was that?" She asked Penelope kindly. "Ookyoo! Ookyoo!" Penelope cried, motioning towards something. We turned to look. She was pointing at the sleeping hamster in the loft, Snoozer. I laughed.

"You're right, Penelope! I bet Snoozer will never get insomnia." Penelope beamed.

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(A/N: Third Person) Near the end of the day, when most of the Ham-Hams were wrapping up their conversations, Panda approached Keona.

"Keona," he said softly, startling her.

"Oh!... Panda! What's wrong?" He shuffled his feet.

"That's strange..." he said quietly. "Whenever I try to talk to you, you always think something's wrong. Why is that? Do I look that depressing?" Keona giggled in spite of herself.

"How about this: Yes, Panda? How may I help you?" Her good-natured sarcasm made him smile. He then remembered what he wanted to tell her, and led her for a second time into her room.

"Keona," he repeated soberly. His sudden seriousness made her shiver.

"Who died?" Keona laughed nervously, trying to dismiss it. Panda looked shocked.

"No! No one! That's not it... I just got a brilliant idea! I've thought about it a lot, but only now did I decide to do something..."

"You're very modest," Keona said sarcastically, smiling. Panda chose to ignore this.

"We have to go." Keona looked confused.

"Where?" Panda's eyes twinkled as he took her paws in his.

"We have to search for... Mina. It's high time we were reunited with our old friend, don't you think?"

Keona didn't move. It was true, both Panda and Keona had considered this course of action, but independantly. They had never discussed it up until now. The shadow of the owl three years ago was vivid in her mind as her eyelids fluttered silently. She remembered the realization of being separated from both Panda and Mina. The horror of alone-ness was too much too bear. And now, she had the chance to search for one best friend with her other best friend. What to do?

The sudden change in the mood combined with tentative silence was too much for Keona to bear.

"When do we leave?" she murmured, hardly hearing herself speak. Panda squeezed her paws.

"Keona, don't think you have no choice in this... but I've made arrangements. Since Mimi is out of town, I asked Boss to go into my cage at eight and pose as me, since the babysitter hasn't seen me before. I've already told Hamtaro, so no doubt the word will be spread when we leave this room."

Keona took a chance and looked bravely into his eyes. There were tears! Were they tears of happiness? Confusion? Sadness?

...Fear?

It wasn't long before she realized she was crying, too. If his plan was successful, they would be reunited with Mina! That was so great Keona couldn't even imagine it. Keona forced a smile.

"Definitely. Let's go! Oh, I can't wait, I'll be back on the street again!"

Her words surprised Panda. He wasn't aware that she had enjoyed the daily thrill of street life, and the independant feeling of fending for yourself. Keona was happy to get a taste of that again, except now she wasn't alone in it.

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Within thirty minutes, Panda and Keona had informed the whole Ham-Ham group of their journey, packed stuff sufficient for at least four months traveling (though Keona insisted that they go empty-handed for a challenge), and said their goodbyes. Within five more minutes, they

were out the door.

As they emerged through the passage, the purity of the sun met their eyes, blinding them for a second. The magical bland of sunset colors reminded Keona of vermilion fire and turquoise water all at once. The spectrum of evening colors was truly a sight, and reminded them of their cause. Without a word, and without lifting their eyes from the gorgeous display of color, the walked on into the rapidly darkening earth.

As the moon came out and shone lightly on the two, she took his hand and held it tight... she would never let it go.

3. Meeka

****Moonlit Search for Love and Loss****

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****Chapter Three:**** Meeka

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If Keona had been alone in this journey, she was positive that the utmost horror and fear would dwell in her heart as she slowly put distance between herself and her friends. She was not, however, alone. The mere fact that the love of her life was with her was enough to comfort her in her nightmares for years to come.

"So," Panda said quietly, "Where should we head first?"

Keona froze. She hadn't thought about that. Mina could be anywhere in the world. Where should she go? It was three years ago, Mina could have moved all the way to the other side of the world by now.

"Do you remember where you came from when you first found the clubhouse?" Panda suggested. Keona nodded.

"Yeah. I came from downtown, and I got there from the cornfields over to the east." Panda smiled.

"Do you remember where the owl dropped you? I don't..."

"Yeah," Keona murmured, suddenly somber. "I visit it once in a while. Why? Do you think we should try and find her old house?"

"Yeah," Panda nodded. "I think that's where we should start."

Keona mentally berated herself. Why hadn't she thought of that? Panda smiled at her, and she felt better. She tried to hug him, but he turned it into a passionate kiss, and they didn't move for several minutes. The devoted love they shared had been more than Keona could ever hope for when she was a child. Looking back, Keona couldn't

believe the stroke of luck she had experienced when she was reunited with her love.

Within an hour they were so far away from their home, that a sickening feeling of despair filled her heart, and Keona wanted to cry.

The farther away Panda and Keona walked, the sharper and shakier her breath was. It wasn't long before hopeless tears were streaming freely down her face. As soon as Panda noticed, his eyes widened.

"Keona? What's wrong? Oh, no... what-"

Keona shushed him with a paw to his lips. "I'm okay... it's just that I have this horrible feeling that we'll never see them again... Hamtaro, and Bijou, and Sandy... oh, Panda-" She fell into his waiting arms and held him tightly, sobbing uncontrollably.

What's wrong with me? Why does... It hurt so much... she thought, squeezing Panda still harder. After her sobs subsided, Panda looked into her eyes and whispered, "Of course we'll see them again. We can visit them every day! Don't you worry about that, Keona..."

Still holding his hand, Keona gazed mournfully up at the sky. Black clouds were hiding the moon.

Suddenly, a yowl emitted from somewhere behind them. The two whirled and gasped at what they saw. A pack of six alleycats were only ten feet away! The leader was a large golden tomcat with a slightly bent tail. The cats were not, however, looking at the two hamsters. They were stalking a small figure, about half of Keona's size. Since it was in shadow and there was no light but the stars, they couldn't see it.

Suddenly the leader yowled again and they took off after their prey, who bolted off quicker than Keona and Panda could follow. They quickly followed them around the corner and saw that three cats had cornered it and the other two were watching over the shoulders of their leader and his henchmen. One cat, a thin silver and black one, let out a low hiss and their prey squeaked loudly in terror.

Just then the clouds parted to reveal a shining full moon. It lit up the alley as a small white-and-chestnut hamster raced behind the group of cats, pounding along the ground and squeaking like nobody's business. The cats all whirled around and took off after Keona while Panda rushed up and grabbed the prey they had been stalking. It was a mouse, red, white and black, and a female mouse at that. Panda smiled. Keona knew what she was doing.

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(A/N: First Person: Keona) I had been chased by alleycats often, occasionally in this exact alley. Therefore, I knew some secrets. I bolted across the alley until I reached the side of a building. Searching frantically, I finally spotted a small step ladder that descended down from a window. I quickly scurried up it and watched with glee as the cats circled beneath me. I knew Panda would have gotten into a safe spot by then.

I smiled at the ladder that had the window closed on it, attaching it firmly. I remembered sneaking into this person's apartment to attach this ladder, knowing it would come in handy one day.

As the cats slowly left, I climbed down cautiously. When I reached the bottom, I surveyed the predators as they stalked away dejectedly. When they were out of sight, I ran down to meet Panda, who was comforting the mouse.

"It's okay... it's okay... they're gone now..." Panda was saying softly. "It's all right..." I grinned.

"You're a natural born father," I remarked slyly.

Panda whipped around and blushed furiously. I didn't want to cause a conflict, so I changed the subject.

"Well, now, what should be do with Squeaky there?" Panda sneered.

"You're one to talk, Keona. I was trying hard not to burst out laughing when you sprinted across, squealing like a guinea pig!" I gave him a nasty look.

"You're avoiding my question. Should we keep him with us?"

"Umm..." Panda muttered, avoiding my eyes. "Actually, I think she's a girl." He blushed even redder and I laughed, then narrowed my eyes.

"Seriously, why are you avoiding my question? Is there a problem?" Panda shook his head vigorously.

"No, it's not that, it's just that... well, I don't know whether she belongs to someone or not. How can we know?" I frowned thoughtfully.

"Well, we could ask her. Has she said anything to you yet?" Panda shook his head.

"She hasn't said anything yet, but let's try." The two walked over to the mouse who was eagerly surveying the alley.

"Hello?" I ventured. "My name is Keona. Where do you live?" The mouse smiled up at me and cried, "Meeka!"

Panda and I glanced nervously at each other, both wondering the same thing. This time Panda tried.

"I'm Panda. Do you live around here? Do you have a human?" But the mouse only smiled. "Meeka!" she cried excitedly. Panda shrugged.

"Well, I guess she's too young to talk. But does that mean she has an owner?" he wondered disappointedly. I was disappointed.

"Well, I guess we shouldn't risk it. Come on, it's late. We gotta set up camp somewhere." We started to walk away, but the mouse followed them briskly, scampering along behind them. I sighed.

"Sorry, little one, but you can't stay with us!" We started off again, but the mouse still followed. Panda looked extremely pained.

"Keona, what do we do?" he asked, not taking his eyes off the mouse.

For an answer, I took Panda's hand and led him away, leaving the mouse behind. She sat there and watched them with mournful eyes. I looked back and noticed, and as I watched, the mouse flipped her head back and cried out sorrowfully. I stopped walking as the horrible sound echoed in my soul. I looked pleadingly at my lover.

"Panda, come on, can you say no to _that??" Accenting her remark, I gestured toward the wailing child. Panda shook his head, and smiled grimly.

"No, I can't. Okay, okay, we can take her with us." I jumped up and down, laughing and clapping. _Why do i always have to be the grown-up?_ thought Panda peevishly. but he didn't say that. Instead, he asked, "What should we call her?"

"Well," I replied, "That's obvious, isn't it? She's Meeka!" Smiling, I ran back to Meeka and gathered her in my arms. The child stopped crying and started laughing joyously, with no restraint to her bliss. _Oh, to be young again,_ I thought, smiling at Panda.

4. Will the Sun Rise?

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New! Due to a request, I've made a picture of Meeka! It's not as good as Keona, but whatever. If you wanna send in some fanart, please do! I'd love some! To see Meeka, go here:
<http://www.geocities.com/viennawood/Meeka.jpg>

****Chapter Three:**** Will the Sun Rise?

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That night, Panda, Keona and Meeka found a cold, damp niche in a brick wall to sleep. Keona had lived there for several months at one point, so she had many surprises hidden in case she returned. She had hidden two books of matches, an old candle, a spare key to a grocery store, five pencils and a crayon, a lightbulb, a ripped quilt (At least five years old) and an ancient cat pillow, as well as several secret passageways.

Panda soon found that he was very grateful for her experience on the streets; without her, he probably would have been out of the picture as early as the incident with the cats.

As for Meeka, the two hamsters quickly grew accustomed to her, and grew to love her as their own daughter. Although neither of them mentioned it, taking care of Meeka really made them think about children. Watching Panda with Meeka, Keona couldn't help but smile.

The first night, they gathered the pillow, quilt and matchbooks, and settled down to sleep. As Keona and Panda struggled to start a fire, Meeka curled up on the pillow and slept. It wasn't until they had a tiny fire started that they turned around to check on Meeka.

With smiles, they tucked her into a warm position and both kissed her good night. For a while, neither Panda nor Keona said a word as they brought the flame up. When it was at a good, steady burn, they decided on a system of guarding; one would sleep for a half hour and the other would watch. Unfortunately, if a threat approached, the most they could do was run. They were, after all, only two hamsters and a baby mouse.

Since neither of the hamsters would admit to being tired, even though it was almost midnight, they stayed up and chatted quietly for a while.

"I can't believe we're actually out here, looking for Mina. It's so unreal," commented Keona thoughtfully, gazing at the twinkling stars.

Panda took her hand. "I know. It's been a long night."

Before Keona could reply, a harsh wind picked up and they heard Meeka shiver. Going to adjust her coverings, Keona said, "I think we should get to bed; it's awfully late."

Panda agreed to take the first shift. As the wind howled steadily louder around him, he too shivered, hardly awake. When he went to wake Keona up for her first shift, he discovered that she wasn't actually asleep.

"I can't sleep, it's way too windy. Tomorrow night, if we get out of the city, I have some friends who are quite hospitable. I'm sure we can stay with them." For now, Panda decided not to pursue this topic too much.

It was an unbearably rough night, but somehow they survived. At dawn, Keona woke Panda and beckoned him look. The first rays of the sun were peeking over the hilltops, casting the sky into deep shades of violet and indigo. Panda and Keona watched, unmoving, as the sun slowly rose and lit the night sky.

When the sun made its full appearance, Panda and Keona smiled and kissed. Honestly, neither of them were sure whether they would make it to see this sunrise. To see the merry sun sparkling on the buildings and awakening city brought them a great feeling of joy and relief.

Meeka scampered up to them and laughed, "Meeka!" Suddenly, Keona noticed something about their new friend that the moonlight hadn't revealed the night before. Meeka's eyes were a bright dawn-tinted violet, the most gorgeous things Keona had ever seen. When she

pointed this out to Panda, he gasped.

"Wow! Purple eyes! You don't see those every day," he remarked, scratching his head.

"No," Keona agreed, smiling. "But they're beautiful, aren't they?" Meeka was obviously growing tired of standing around talking. She ran circles around Panda and Keona, crying, "Meeka! Meeka!" without stopping to catch her breath. Keona grinned.

"I suppose we should be on our way. Do we have everything we can carry?"

"Yeah," Panda nodded. "And I might add we could carry a lot more, if you wanted."

"No," Keona said firmly. "We don't need anything else. If I can find these guys, they can help us out a lot. We should get to their place by evening. Okay?" Panda smiled ruefully. He knew she had spent two years on the streets, and always wondered what kind of friends she had picked up. _I guess I'll find out tonight,_ he thought decidedly.

So, with that, the three rodents started off into the bustling city, with more confidence than normal. Something about the young mouse who had joined them was strangely comforting, and helped them grow more confident.

After a few hours, the three began to get hungry. They soon discovered that Meeka didn't do things halfway. If she was upset, everyone was upset. She made herself very clear.

"Meeeee-ka!" she whined, making Keona bite her lip in despair. She turned to face Meeka.

"We're going to get some food soon, okay? We just need to leave the city."

"What's past the city?" Panda interrupted.

Keona's eyes sparkled in delight. "A gigantic cornfield, as far as the eye can see. Imagine... such a feast we'll have! Add that to the acorns and nuts outside the field, and we-"

"Are you telling me we have to get past a huge cornfield?" Panda said abruptly.

"No! Of course not! My friends live on the edge of the cornfield, near the middle. Once we reach their house, we spend the night. Only then do we brave the rest of the cornfield. 'Kay?"

Panda nodded, but still grimaced inwardly. _It will certainly be a while before dinner,_ he thought unhappily.

Finally they began to see the last traces of the city. In the distance they could catch glimpses of hugely tall cornstalks waving in the morning breeze. At last the city was behind them and there was indeed a gigantic cornfield in front of them. They swerved to the edge and found a good place to rest.

While Meeka played with the butterflies and insects, Panda and Keona scurried up a stalk and worked on gnawing a cob off the stalk. In between bites, they chatted.

"Are we really going to keep Meeka all the way with us?" Panda inquired. "Something could happen to her..."

"What you don't think I -uh, we- are responsible enough to care for a child?" Keona demanded. Panda couldn't think of a suitable response, so he busied himself at getting the husk off.

A minute later, Meeka had scurried up the stalk herself. When Keona spotted her she yelped and stumbled, catching herself just in time. She took Meeka in her arms.

"See?!" Panda hissed. Keona scowled at him and climbed back down with the laughing mouse in her arms.

When she got back up to the top, she stopped to catch her breath while Panda watched amusedly as Meeka returned, a huge smile on her face. Suddenly Keona cried out; the corn had been almost gnawed through and now it was falling... the strain on the husk broke and the corn tumbled down to their resting spot, nearly taking the laughing child with it.

Keona once again got down the stalk with Meeka in her arms, Panda following close behind. Soon they had gotten the husk off and were preparing too late. Meeka, however, lacked the patience of her elders.

Upon seeing the corn she grinned, "Meeka!" and dove in, chewing it at a rate that would have seemed impossible. Quickly Keona and Panda took some for themselves and ate it off to the side.

"Ooh! This is good corn!" Panda exalted with his mouth full.

"Yeah, totally!" Keona agreed. It was indeed, some of the best, juiciest corn around, and they were lucky to have picked it.

Meanwhile, Meeka filled her tummy and joined the two hamsters, and settled in for a quick nap.

Stroking Meeka softly, Keona smiled, "We are lucky to have found her. She's like an angel..."

Panda agreed and kissed both girls softly, before realizing that Keona had fallen asleep as well. Smiling, he settled down to rest and guard his friends, alone with his thoughts. ~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*~*

When Keona and Meeka woke up twenty minutes later, they prepared to leave, storing several kernels of corn and husk pieces with their stuff. They set out for several hours of walking. Though they walked for a time that seemed impossible, they never seemed to get anywhere. The stalks moved past them slowly, and only two hours later did they catch the first glimpse of the end of the cornfield, at least half a mile away.

When Panda wondered why they didn't see the house they would stay at,

Keona explained. "Their house is hidden. See, they're not too fond of visitors... um..." Panda cocked an eyebrow, and Keona sighed.

"Actually, they're not really on good terms with the police, frankly." Panda blinked.

"They're outlaws," he said, nonplussed. Keona nodded eagerly.

"Thieves, yeah. It's a married couple of raccoons, and-"

"Raccoons?!" Panda demanded abruptly. Keona flinched. "Meeka!" cried Meeka happily.

"Is that a problem?" She asked meekly.

"Of course! Golly, you mean I never told you? I've had traumatical experiences with raccoons," he explained dramatically. Keona rolled her eyes. She knew Panda's definition of 'traumatical experience'.

"When I was six months old, a raccoon chased me down the street and into an alley," He said sufferably. Keona laughed loudly.

"That's it?" she laughed, tears brimming at her eyes. "Honestly, Panda-"

"I was only a little kid!" he said indignantly. "And it was scary-" But Keona would not stop laughing, and now Meeka was laughing along with them, and eventually he joined in. For a while none of them paid attention to their surroundings, and before they knew it, they were there.

End
file.